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COVFEFE, BRITISH IDIOM RETURN TO CHURCHILL DOWNS BREEDERS' CUP CHAMPIONS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2019) – The look on trainer **Brad Cox's** assistant trainer **Jorje Abrego** said everything as he stood proudly alongside two winning Breeders' Cup flower blankets that were showcased outside Barn 22 at Churchill Downs from \$1 million Filly and Mare Sprint (Grade I) winner **Covfefe** and \$2 million Juvenile Fillies (GI) hero **British Idiom**.

"I live for moments like this," Abrego said. "These horses are my life; they mean everything to me."

Cox's historic Breeders' Cup weekend began Friday when **Michael Dubb, The Elkstone Group, Madaket Stables** and **Bethlehem Stables'** British Idiom wore down favored **Donna Veloce** to win the Juvenile Fillies by a neck. The next day, **LNJ Foxwoods'** crack sprinter Covfefe held off the late charge of **Bellafina** by three-quarters of a length to win the Filly and Mare Sprint. Both victories likely locked up season-ending championship honors for Cox's fillies.

"It was a very special weekend for our entire barn," Cox said. "I feel like they are both champions after that. We came to California with five Breeders' Cup chances and won two – I'd say that's a pretty good weekend."

Along with Cox's Breeders' Cup winners, locally based trainer **Steve Asmussen** and jockey **Ricardo Santana Jr.** also shared in Breeders' Cup glory with **Bill** and **Corinne Heiligbrodt's** \$2 million Breeders' Cup Sprint (GI) winner **Mitole**.

"This horse is simply unbelievable," Santana said. "Once he sees a hole to go through he takes off like you'd never believe. He gets so determined on the racetrack to win. That's what makes him so special. It was an unbelievable day."

Mitole is slated to stand stud at **Spendthrift Farm** in 2020 for \$25,000.

JEFFERSON CUP WINNER SPECTACULAR GEM TOPS FIELD OF 14 IN \$175,000 COMMONWEALTH TURF – **Candie Baker's** \$125,000 Jefferson Cup winner **Spectacular Gem** drew post position No. 6 in an over-subscribed field of 14 horses who will take to the Matt Winn Turf Course in Saturday's 16th running of the \$175,000 Commonwealth Turf (Grade III) at Churchill Downs.

Run at 1 1/16 miles for 3-year-olds, the Commonwealth is carded as Race 10 on Saturday's 11-race program with a scheduled post time of 5:36 p.m. (all times Eastern). First post is 1 p.m.

Spectacular Gem, trained by **Jimmy Baker**, led wire-to-wire in the Jefferson Cup under jockey **James Graham**. The son of Can the Man finished first in his last two starts but was disqualified at odds of 36-1 two races ago in the \$200,000 Caesars Stakes at Indiana Grand because of interference in late stretch. Graham has the return call in the Commonwealth.

The three horses who finished behind Spectacular Gem in the Jefferson Cup – **Calumet Farm's Tracksmith, Ken** and **Sarah Ramsey's Faraway Kitten** and **Evelyn** and **Darnell Yates** and **Kevin Kuta's Clint Maroon (GB)** – are all entered in Commonwealth Turf.

Another rival in the Commonwealth is **Rick, Donna** and **Jeff Awtrey's** multiple stakes winner **Marquee Prince**. Trained by **Brad Cox**, Marquee Prince enters the Commonwealth following a three-quarters of a length score in a conditioned allowance event at Indiana Grand. **Tyler Gaffalione** has the call from post 5.

Other notable entrants in the Commonwealth Turf: **Bruce Lunsford** and **Lansdon Robbins'** \$125,000 Ontario Derby (GIII) runner-up **Armistice Day**; **Gulliver Racing, Craig Drager** and **Dan Legan's** \$300,000 Super Derby (GIII) third-place finisher **Pirate's Punch**; and **Bronte Marshall's** \$50,000 Robert Dupret Derby winner **Tiz Plus**, who will attempt to give trainer **Steve Asmussen** his second Commonwealth win in a row.

The complete field for the Commonwealth Turf from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and weight): **Tobacco Road** (Alex Achard, John Ennis, 118 pounds); **Osage Moon** (Miguel Mena, Mark Casse, 118); **Clint Maroon** (Channing Hill, Wayne Catalano, 120); **Pirate's Punch** (Robby Albarado, Grant Forster, 118); **Marquee Prince** (Gaffalione, Cox, 120); **Spectacular Gem** (Graham, Baker, 120); **Tracksmith** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Joe Sharp, 120); **Tiz Plus** (Ricardo Santana Jr., Asmussen, 118); **Knicks Go** (Gabriel Saez, Ben Colebrook, 118); **Armistice Day** (Corey Lanerie, Barbara Minshall, 120); **Mr Dumas** (Joe Rocco Jr., John Ortiz, 118); **Louder Than Bombs** (Alex Canchari, David Fawkes, 118); **Faraway Kitten** (Julien Leparoux, Mike Maker, 123); and **Journeyman** (Declan Cannon, Eoin Harty, 118). Should any late scratches occur, the following horses could draw into the field: **Proliferate** (Chris Landeros, Casse, 118); and **Clear Vision** (Cannon, Jerry O'Dwyer, 118).

GEROUX SET TO RETURN FROM BROKEN STERNUM – Veteran rider **Florent Geroux** was back working horses Wednesday morning at Churchill Downs and is scheduled to return to the races on Saturday after suffering a broken sternum three weeks ago during a training mishap at Keeneland.

“I’m just very thankful it wasn’t worse,” said Geroux, who worked as an on-air analyst for a French television station during this year’s Breeders’ Cup. “It felt good to get back riding this morning and get back to work. It was a bummer to miss riding at the Breeders’ Cup but I’ll be back next year.”

Geroux has three calls for Saturday’s card at Churchill Downs.

DENNIS’ MOMENT BACK AT CHURCHILL FOLLOWING ‘GUT-WRENCHING’ BREEDERS’ CUP EXPERIENCE – Highly-touted juvenile **Dennis’ Moment** returned to training Thursday morning at Churchill Downs following his disappointing last-place finish in Friday’s \$2 million Breeders’ Cup Juvenile (Grade I) at Santa Anita.

“I just wanted to get him out there to see how he’d handle things,” trainer **Dale Romans** said. “He looked really good. We’ll see where we go next but I just wanted to take it one day at a time to see how he was doing.”

Owned by **Albaugh Family Stables**, Dennis’ Moment stumbled badly out of the gate in the Juvenile and was distanced throughout the race.

“This game is full of ups and downs and that was probably our lowest point,” Albaugh Family Stables’ racing manager **Jason Loutsch** said.

Dennis’ Moment returned to Churchill Downs on Saturday and the team originally stated he’d receive a 45-day layoff until his 3-year-old season.

The \$200,000 Iroquois Stakes (GIII) winner was not the only horse in the Breeders’ Cup Juvenile who didn’t handle the race well. **Joseph Sutton**’s Iroquois runner-up **Scabbard** returned to Churchill Downs following his fourth-place effort in the Juvenile.

“No one was able to close on that surface,” trainer **Eddie Kenneally** said. “The track played weird for a lot of horses out there.”

LANERIE, ASMUSSEN OFF TO BLAZING STARTS IN FALL MEET – Perennial leading rider **Corey Lanerie** along with defending 2018 Fall Meet leading trainer **Steve Asmussen** quickly opened up to swift leads in their respective standings through six days of the 2019 Fall Meet. Lanerie led **Ricardo Santana Jr.** 12-7 wins in the jockey standings. **Brian Hernandez Jr.** was in third with six victories. ... Meanwhile, in the trainer standings, Asmussen held an 8-4 win lead over **Brad Cox**. **Peter Miller** was third with three victories through four starters. ... In the owner standings, **Bob Lothenbach**’s **Lothenbach Stables** had four winners through five starts and held a two-win margin lead over **Sagamore Farm**.

DOWN THE STRETCH – Racing continues Wednesday for a five-day week beneath the Twin Spires with a daily first post of 1 p.m. (all times Eastern). Wednesday’s 10-race card has a \$1,621 carryover in the \$1 Super Hi 5 in Race 10. ... On Sunday, Churchill Downs will celebrate Military Appreciation Day. We invite any active military or veterans to enjoy a day at the races with a special discounted ticket to Millionaires Row for \$29. A portion of the ticket sales will benefit **Supplies Over Seas**, a locally-based nonprofit organization that has delivered supplies to 105 countries around the world. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.ticketmaster.com/military and use the offer code FTKNOX. ... “**Inside Churchill Downs**” will return to the airwaves Friday at 6 p.m. on ESPN 680/105.7. Those outside the Louisville area can listen live on www.espnloouisville.com. ... Celebrating birthdays this week at Churchill Downs: jockey **Miguel Mena** (Wednesday, 33-years-old); jockey **Calvin Borel** (Thursday, 53); trainer **Mike Johnson** (Thursday, 43); and paddock blacksmith **Dennis Evinger** (Thursday, 77). ... Entering Wednesday’s card at Churchill Downs, **Randy Morse** was two wins away from 1,000-career victories. He had one entry on Wednesday: **Wrath** (Race 8, 12-1). ... Trainer **Mike Maker** is two wins away from 400-career victories at Churchill Downs. He has no entries on Wednesday.

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